



CONTRIBUTING TO UNDERSTAND UNIQUE ART FEATURES OF THE VIETNAMESE DONG HO FOLK PAINTINGS

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ABSTRACT

Đồng Hồ folk paintings belong to is a line of painting originating created and produced by the people of Dong Ho village and developed into craft villages. This is one the three most famous line of woodcut painting of Vietnam people. The article contributes to understanding the unique art features from the origin and characteristics of this line through painting techniques, the theme of the painting and its transformation over time.

KEY WORDS: Dong Ho folk paintings, unique art.

1. INTRODUCE:

Dong Ho is a place of Dong Khe village, Song Ho commune, Thuan Thanh district, Bac Ninh province. This is a pure Vietnamese village, nestled on the southern bank of Duong River, about 30 kilometres northeast of Hanoi. The village had an ancient name of Dong Mai or Nom which was the village of Mai under General Ho, Sieu Moi district, Thuan Thanh district, Kinh Bac town. Dong Ho painting is printed from wood carving planks, paintings of many colors have many wood carving patterns with corresponding colors and is a type of Vietnamese folk painting, originating from Dong Ho village, Song Ho commune Thuan Thanh District, Bac Ninh Province. In the past, on the occasion of Tet, Dong Ho paintings were sold everywhere for buyers to decorate in Tet holiday, now, trading is easy and it has also changed the habit of buying Đồng Hồ paintings, many businesses sprung up, they traded continuously for 1 year and Đồng Hồ paintings can be bought everywhere.

2. CONTENT:

2.1. About Dong Ho village in Vietnam:

According to Dai Nam Nhat Thong Chi book, Thien Duc river (Duong river today) flows through Sieu Moi district (present-day Thuan Thanh), also known as Dong Ho river, Dong Ho wharf. Thus, the place of Dong Ho has been recorded in a long-standing bibliography. Thuan Thanh district, Thanh Khuong commune, emerged an ancient political and cultural center of Luy Lau, also known as Lien Lau. The Thuan Thanh area was an early Buddhist center with the center of ancient pagodas belonging to the Four Dharma system, and the earliest was the Dau temple. Between 187 and 226 AD, the Dau pagoda was built and is considered the oldest temple in Vietnam. There is a legend about the Indian Zen master Ti Ni Da Luu Chi who came here to practice and spread Buddhism since 580 AD. Here, there is the famous But Thap pagoda with the thousand-eyed Buddha statue, the wooden tower of Cuu Pham Lien Hoa. The pagoda is also located on the right bank of Duong River. A Thuan Thanh literary area gave birth to Dong Ho village with a unique heritage of Dong Ho folk paintings as a matter of course. According to the genealogy of the Nguyen Dang family, Dong Ho painting village dates back to the Le So dynasty (1527). Dong Ho village is not large in scale, consists of only 18 hamlets with 17 families, located in the middle part of an important waterway, Duong river, close to the junction of 6 rivers (Luc Dau Giang), convenient for water and water traffic, connecting the origin of Kinh Bac with Thang Long and Hai Dong (Hai Duong) in the past. Such traffic advantage has contributed to making Dong Ho paintings easy to distribute to many regions in the North and Central regions, so that Tet comes, every countryside has paintings hung on in this occasion.

Dong Ho that the folk name is Mai village. There have been verses about making paintings in Mai village. Currently, Dong Ho has only a few hundred roofs. This is a handicraft village with three ancient trades: making votive goods, folk paintings and making firecrackers since ancient times. Besides making famous folk paintings throughout the region, Dong Ho also has a profession of making votive to provide for many places. Perhaps these two occupations are closely linked together, based on the skill of the hands and the same production techniques are quite similar.

Besides the profession of making paintings and making votive products, Dong Ho villagers also have a career in making firecrackers. Although Dong Ho produces both wares and firecrackers, what makes people remember a lot is still folk paintings. The Dong Ho village festival is held mainly at the communal house, also known as the "Ky Yen for coolness" festival. The offerings in the festival are usually votive items: elephants, horses, hats, costumes for Thunder God, Rakshasa... The village holds water once every five years (in the past, water pro-

cess was held once a year). Water was taken from the wharf Ho. Having to go to the boat in the middle of Duong river to get clean water to bring to God. The belief of boating to the middle of the river to get clean water to worship Thanh Hoang - a Vietnam God is a very old belief of the Vietnamese living along the big rivers such as the Red River and Duong River. This belief is also accompanied by the ceremony of bathing the statue of "carpentry sex", reflecting the respect for the ancient water and river gods, also bearing a trace of praying for the prosperity of farmers water, fishing, and fishing riverside.

2.2. Dong Ho folk paintings:

In addition to the main line of folk paintings of Dong Ho, which are wood-carved and hand-painted paintings, Dong Ho artisans also make world paintings and paper paintings. However, these two types of paintings are not popular and little known. This article extensively research on the hand-drawn and woodcut paintings of Dong Ho.

2.2.1. History, development and themes of Dong Ho folk paintings:

The early age of Dong Ho painting is likely from the time when Lieu Trang's wood carving technique in the mid-fifteenth century. Meanwhile the beginning of Dong Ho village's painting business was probably around the seventeenth century. In terms of geography, Dong Ho village is located along the Duong River, has many advantages for trade, and products can be promptly supplied to the regions by water or land. Dong Ho village approached the wood carving village in Hai Duong that can provide the original materials and techniques for carving and painting. Some neighboring villages such as Dao Tu produce pine brooms (called "thet") to serve for painting printing colors (according to artist Nguyen Huu Qua). Maybe Dong Ho people also buy buffalo leather glue in other places to mix with colors ... With these factors, Dong Ho village has all the necessary elements to become a traditional craft village of Kinh Bac folk paintings.

Dong Ho folk paintings may be born in the seventeenth century. The brilliant period of Dong Ho folk paintings was from the late 19th to 1945. Hunger all year round, but when Tet comes, they have to buy paintings, which is an indispensable custom of this period. Dong Ho folk paintings are not registered. Those who compose the model, print, or draw do not leave any traces of their names on the paintings (until now, only artists have imprinted on their paintings composing or ancient costumes). However, Dong Ho villagers still remember the artisans who lived in the village or originated in the village but went to the streets to settle down. They are the real composers, their works are the original models for Dong Ho artists to model and compose more diverse.

After 1945, Dong Ho folk paintings had a natural development in a number of families. 1960-1961: Establish Song Ho Agricultural Cooperative. In 1961, many folk paintings of Ho village were printed for the first time in the collection of folk paintings. The year of 1962 was also a memorable milestone, Dong Ho folk paintings were again included in the collection of Vietnamese folk paintings, color printed books, large format. In 1971, a collection of folk paintings in Ho village comprised of 15 sheets, printed according to the traditional techniques of Ho village folk paintings, participated in the International Book Fair (IBA) held in the city of Leipzig (German Democratic Republic) that was awarded a Gold Medal. In 2013, Dong Ho folk painting profession was recognized as the National Intangible Cultural Heritage; In March 2017, the President of Bac Ninh province approved a detailed outline of the national nomination dossier to request UNESCO to include Dong Ho's folk painting profession on the list of intangible cultural heritages that need to be protected emergency.

Dong Ho painting is known as Tet painting or pig chicken painting. That gener-

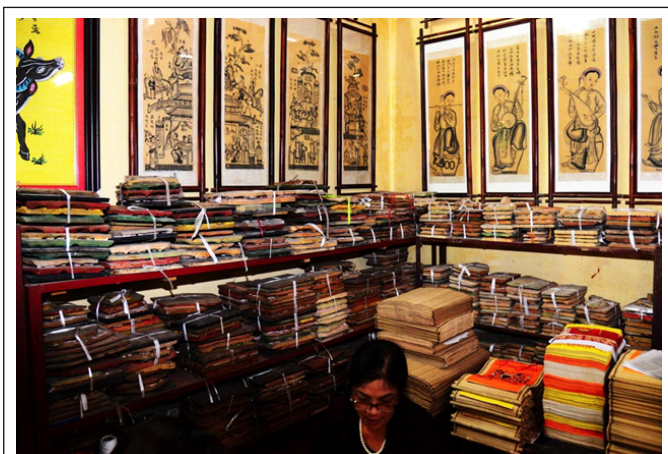
ally shows that paintings mainly serve the farmers, especially on Tet. Topic is their life and aspirations. This is close to the theme of the Kim Hoang painting line. Meanwhile, the line of Hang Trong paintings tends to focus on subjects of beliefs and religions. Of course, these three lines of pictures are increasingly influencing each other in the overlapping topic.

2.2.2. Traditional Dong Ho painting techniques:

During the development of centuries, especially in the current renovation period, Dong Ho's painting techniques had an exchange with other painting techniques. Folk engraved in the country and the region. Therefore, in this monograph, we want to go into depth into the old Dong Ho painting techniques, in the traditional style that for many years made the Dong Ho style.

Wood carving technique: The technique of carving the plank after "making samples" is that the artist must separate the colors of each board. Each color is a printing board, when finished printing, you will get a colorful overall picture. Commonly, it is necessary to engrave many boards, possibly up to 5 boards for 5 colors. Including stroke board and color printing board. They also make "sheets" to position the board, the worker must align the "gauge" to avoid the same color.

According to many elderly people, the wood carving technique to create printing boards in Dong Ho can be done by workers in Lieu Trang village (Tan Hung commune, Hai Duong city, Hai Duong province). This is a village with many famous wood carvers in the area, and many wood carvers from Lieu Trang village to Hanoi to practice. Later, Dong Ho people took over the wood carving profession of Lieu Trang and developed it by themselves in the village.



Ancient carved boards in Dong Ho painting village
(Photo by Trinh Sinh)

Dong Ho villagers have creativity and talent plus talent and aesthetics. They are real folk artisans who have composed samples of paintings from village life. Those are "anonymous" authors who did not save their names on the paintings, but were remembered by villagers forever. These artists have created pictures on paper, then clearly tracing the colors and strokes on thin paper and then pasted on wooden boards to chisel and engrave prints. How many colors does the painting have? The engraving must be smooth, high flat, according to the image on the paper to engrave a negative on the engraving board. Until the printing is completed, it will be "positive" on the picture. Wood for carving planks must be fine-grain wood, flexible, durable, with color permeability. Commonly, people choose the type of wood to make the board to print strokes.

For color printing boards, they are usually ink-heart wood, heart-yellow, amber, grease ... flexible, smooth, durable and have a porous grain that is easy to absorb color. The plank maker often chooses wood from a few years ago to cut the board, let it dry and laminated, smooth, to prevent the printing from warping. The tools to engrave planks are forms of iron chisels of different sizes to meet each plank carving requirement. Such chisels are called "ve" to shape like a trough, a straight line ... Besides "ve", there are also sharp cuttings to cut deep, high walls that the craftsman calls to carve the dyke foot to Can print tens of thousands of paintings without being worn out and streaking ink blurs lines. For the Dong Ho people, the printed board is considered a family heirloom, passed from generation to generation, but the printed board has not much wear. Meanwhile the most important thing is that they save samples, sometimes hundreds of years. The following engravings are sometimes just the inheritance of the previous engravings but rarely change.

Dó paper-making techniques: Beautiful Dong Ho painting is also partly important thanks to special printing paper, called dó paper. Dó paper is a special paper, has a long durability, used to print colors, scriptures and folk paintings. Dong Ho paintings often use dó paper materials of Dong Cao village (about 12km from Dong Ho village). The paper making process includes:

Soak dó: first dó tree is peeled and soaked in water for 1 to 3 days and then

drained. Handling all the part, soaked lime, shredded and stomped with lime.

Cook: cook the shell for a few days.

Wash: When cooking is finished, it will be soaked out of impurities, then continue to soak in lime water for a few days.

Peel the shell: peel off the black outer shell, just take the intestine to drain.

Crushing and mixing pulp: crushed intestines, crush them in mountainous areas by hand, and use electric industrial machines in Dong Cao. When adhesion is reached, the powder is immersed in clean water.

Dó dough: soaked in tanks, powder dissolved in water is stirred well. This will let the sap of the tree stick in to allow the stack of sheets of paper to be stacked without sticking together. Nowadays, it is replaced with industrial additives.

Torrefing: is the most important step, requires the ingenuity and talent of the paper maker and decides on the quality of the paper. Torrefy sickle is a sheet of cork stretched on a wooden mold. People waved the sickle many times in a pulp tank to leave the powder on the curtain of sickle seo. After that, remove the wooden mold, turn it upside down so that the bottom layer of paper is correctly stacked on the first layer of paper, the cork screen is lifted and folded back into the mold.

Paper pressing: Pile wet paper after seo is placed on a wooden board and bricks to squeeze out water. It is then inserted into the press lever to squeeze the water out.

Drying: this process is usually exposed to natural light to slowly evaporate. Particularly for woodcut printing paper, in order to prevent the paper's smudge, people used lake water and alum to put it in one of the paper making stages. The more alum paste mixture, the less spilliness of the paper. So paper is usually small, size is usually 14,5x20,4 inches; divided by 14,5x10,2 inches; divide by three is 10,2x7,2 inches and divide by four, also known as jackfruit painting, will be 5.1x7,2 inches

Dong Ho painting is painted "diep" into paper. Therefore, for many years, the Dong Ho painting line was still known as "diep painting". To create the iridescent beauty of the diep is a unique technical process that takes effort but has been passed down for many years: it is the profession of making scallop powder. Firstly, the raw materials. People have to go to the sea to collect the corpses specialized for making paper, called Mop disk shell, which has a nacre-light, paper-thin, white color. These scallops live in shallow coastal waters. When bringing the scallop shell, the worker must pick up all the pieces of the shell mixed in, then wash it thoroughly, dry it. After that, they put them in a mortar and pound it like a mortar to pound the rice into scallop flour for about 2 hours. Then, mix the flour with water, then hold it like a ball of sticky rice, then dry to use gradually. When making folk paintings, they bring those handfuls of flour together with the paste made of glutinous flour to create a paste, then use a broom to sweep the paper to create specialized scallop paper. The face-board printing technique, the color-overlapping technique:

The printing of Dong Ho is a printing style like stamping and different from the face-up printing of Hang Trong folk paintings. To print a picture, there must be many overlapping prints. Print each copy one by one, one color for each copy, so that the colors do not overlap leading to color blurring. Therefore, the woodblock must be made with absolute match. However, sometimes the boards with slightly overlapping colors are the intentions of the craftsmen, creating a unique and unique beauty. That is the technique of overprinting, creating intermediate colors, creating vivid colors and not drying.

Dó paper is put underneath, each color engraved turn up. The final product is a multicolored painting from separate prints. Simple Dong Ho color palettes: The background of the picture is ivory-white of scallop paper, lemon-yellow and orange-red. Creating a bold black contour that captures the human subject, which is depicted from a woodblock painted in black, fine and porous bamboo charcoal. Creating patches of color inside the contour as separate palettes, usually reddish-brown from ocher or indigo green. Depending on the degree of color mixing, there are different tones of light and dark.



The process of printing Dong Ho paintings (Photo by: Trinh Sinh)

Dong Ho painting is inherited from the wood carving techniques and unique color schemes of the Dong Ho villagers. Previously, in front of a picture of Dong Ho, viewers could immediately distinguish by style and themes different from other folk paintings. Nowadays, in addition to the traditional style, the Dong Ho people also have artistic exchanges, topics in paintings with other folk paintings. However, Dong Ho painting line still carries bold folk style from ancient times passed down. The painting process is as follows: brush ink with a brush to soak into the cover, then “smash the color”, that is, smash the engraving into the cover to absorb the engraving and then print it out like a stamp, called “face printing planks” (“opposite to the” face-up print “of the Kim Hoang and Hang Trong lines of painting). Then turn the board upside down when the paper is still stuck to the board, continue to use loofah to rub the back of the paper to fill it with color, then remove the paper. Each color on the picture is a printed board. Usually, there are about 4 color printing boards and 1 black stroke board are printed at the end. In color printing boards, they choose the “strong” color printed first and then another color. Often printing in red, then blue and white. The red printing board is also engraved with 2 embossed dots to act as the “base” for the following printing boards. Color materials:

The coloring materials of Dong Ho folk paintings are completely available in the village such as: gardenia, flower buds, indigo leaves, wine bark, baby jackfruit powder, bamboo charcoal, copper rust, mineral sand ... There are several popular ways to create colors as follows:

To have a yellow color, Dong Ho people put flowers and water in a copper pot and simmer for 2 days, mixed with sticky glue.

Red color that take the lipstick from Thien Thai mountain (Gia Binh district) to smash to pieces, sift it dry, filter the water and mix it with sticky glue powder.

Green from the Indian taro, ground sweet leaf, mixed with sticky glue powder.

In the past, indigo blue mainly bought from mountainous ethnic groups such as Tay, Nung, and H'Mong because they often soaked indigo leaves to dye their clothes.

Black color that the craftsman who uses bamboo leaves (or sticky rice straw) to burn into ashes and then put them in a jar to soak for 1 year, decant to get thick water below, mix with glutinous paste. The more sour the glue, the more beautiful the black.

To get the pink color, the painter took from scallop powder mixed with red lipstick powder, depending on the ratio, there are different shades of pink, close to human skin. It is also possible to overprint white on vermilion to produce a pink color.

White color is usually from crushed scallops mixed with paste.

From the above basic colors, the artist also concocts many other intermediate colors based on his experience and his aesthetics. The stitching of paper to scan the background color is also quite elaborate. To make the paper background hard and have a sparkling beauty, they have to use diluted scallop powder to apply a few layers that will be white. Sometimes white scallop powder is mixed with other colors to create an orange, lemon yellow background, ... experiences illustrate sweep scallop using a pine broom. Vertical paint of pictures showing human faces, horizontal scanning often shows animals. Painting scallop several times on paper. The last paint to get “grain”, ie create beautiful lines like fine wood grain.

3. CONCLUSION:

Dong Ho painting in Bac Ninh of Vietnam is a unique folk line, requiring the inge-

nuity of Vietnamese hands. Dong Ho painting belongs to the line of paintings printed from wood carving planks, created and produced by the people of Dong Ho village, developed into a craft village. This is a line of paintings that attaches and vividly shows the traditional Vietnamese agricultural society, the working life of the simple peasant, customs and activities of the Vietnamese people. Dong Ho painting with folk artistic value has entered history books, poetry, Vietnamese souls.

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